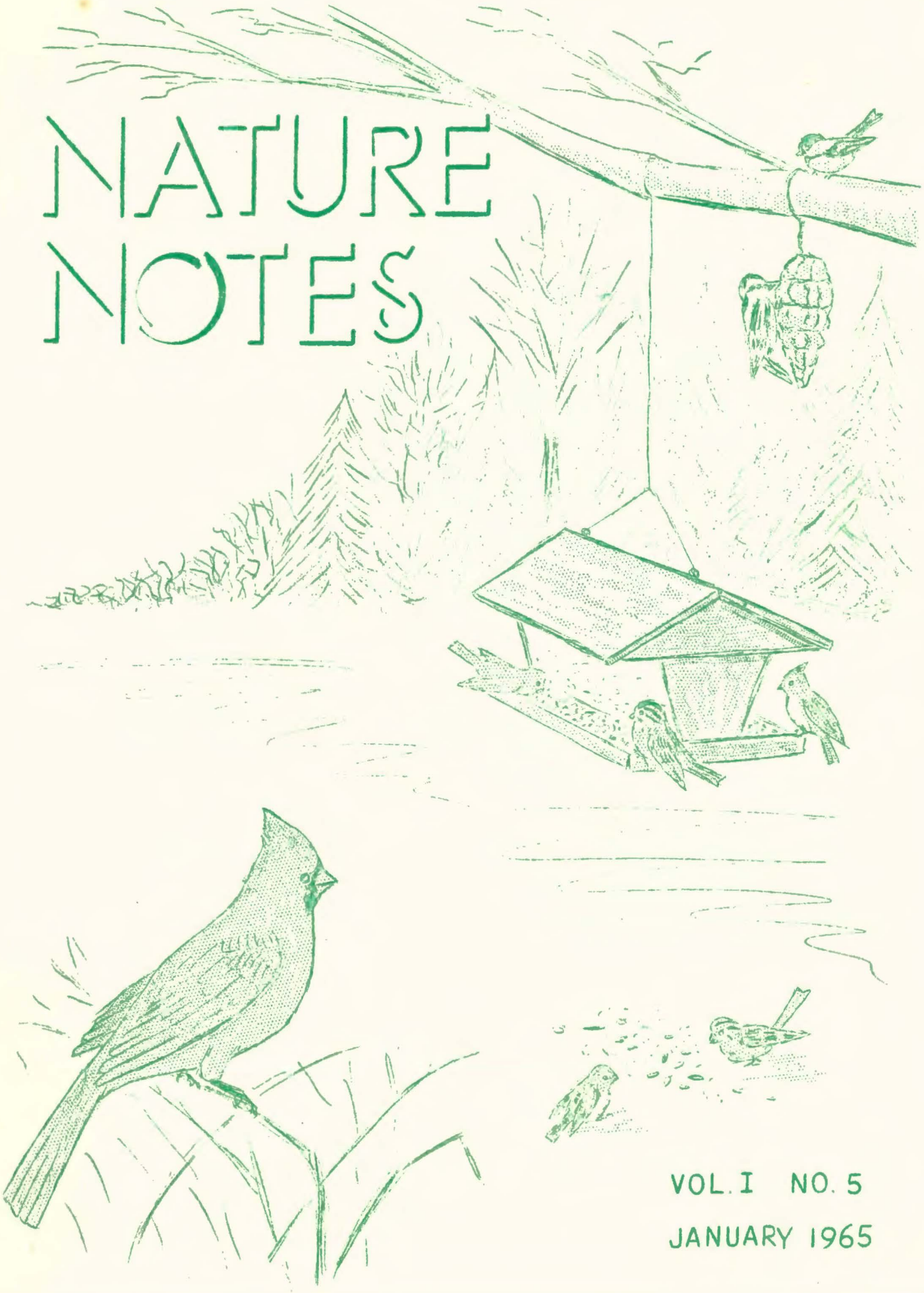
NATURE NOTES



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"NATURE NOTES"

is published by

THE THAMES SCIENCE CENTER, INC.

Director & Editor: Roy A. Kennan

It is the purpose of this monthly publication, sent free to all members of The Thames Science Center, to report on activities at the Center, both in the month just past and in the months to come, to welcome new members to the organization, and to offer informational articles in the field of Natural Science.

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CONTENTS
JANUARY 1965

Publications Schedule.....Page 1
Monthly Newsletter.....Page 2
Activities Calendar, January-February 1965.....Page 3
Contest: What-Is-It?.....Page 4
P.S.W.S. Trailside Lecture.....Page 4
NATURE NOTE: Feeding Birds in Winter.....Page 5
(This Nature Note was written by Don-Paul Sommerfeld, former Director of the Science Center, and is being re-published at this time.)

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Publications Schedule

Because of the confusion arising from scrambled publication dates in recent months, we are printing here the co-operative schedule agreed upon by the Science Center and the Pequot-sepos Wildlife Sanctuary for the first part of the Trial Merger period. This exchange of publications is being done in order to acquaint the membership of each organization with what the other has to offer.

November 1964.....	Pequot Trails, published jointly, with a Nature Note included in it, and sent to both groups.**
December 1964.....	Nature Notes, sent to T.S.C. members.
January 1965.....	Pequot Conservationist and Nature Notes, printed separately, combined, and sent to both groups.
February 1965.....	Nature Notes, sent to T. S. C. members.

** The Nature Note, entitled "The Strand Zone", appears in the center fold of Pequot Trails.

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
January 1965

Hello There!

It would be nice if I could relate all of the good things that have happened since the October 1964 Newsletter, but because of time and space limitations we'll have to settle for just the highlights...

The Christmas Bazaar was a success ...we took in about $265.00 in the short space of four hours. This isn't quite as much money as was realised last year, but when you take into acoount the shorter time in which people were able to participate, we did very well indeed Many thanks to all of you who donated things to sell and/or your time and effort that made the whole thing possible!

The contests run in November and December were both great successes! The What-Is-It? Contest received a total of 183 entries, and the winners, each of whom received a small prize, were :

Kindergarten - 2nd Grade .. Tamar Cohen, Mohegan Ave., New Londor
3rd - 6th Grade ...Peter Detmold, Williams Street , New London
Over 6th Grade ...Bob Almy, Williams Street, New London.

The Name The Squirrel Contest garnered 103 entries, and the name the judges picked was "Squiffy", submitted by Cathy Ellison, a 3rd Grade T.S.C. member from Ocean Avenue, New London. Cathy also received a small prize for submitting the winning name.

The United Fund of Southeastern Connecticut has allocated the sum of $3800.00 to the Science Center for 1965. This is a very important contribution to our cause, but it is somewhat less than we need, and we can only hope that some of the difference will be made up by active participation on the part of our members...

Memberships are coming in in what I'd call a steady trickle... it sure would be nice to see this increase to a steady stream! It wouldn't hurt a bit to tell your friends and neighbors about the Center and what it can offer for their children. If you'll check this month's Activities Calendar on page 3 you'll see that the program is varied and , I hope, interesting to one and all.

In the October 1964 Nature Notes we published our need for binoculars. At least a part of this need has been filled, and from an unexpected source! From the proceeds of an auction held by the Providence - New London Doll Club and conducted by Miss Iola Rose, President, came a check for $150.00 to the Science Center! This has enabled us to purchase a pair of binoculars, and the remainder of the money will go toward the purchase of containers to hold loan exhibits we hope to have available in the near future. Thank you, Miss Rose, for continuing to be of such help to an organization you helped to get started...

Roy A. Kennan

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR - JANUARY - FEBRUARY 1965

24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20

ANNUAL MEETING

Wednesday, January 27, 8:00 P.M., at T.S.C. - Annual Meeting of the Thames Science Center, as announced on page 2 of the last issue of Nature Notes. Officers for the new year will be elected at this time.

LECTURES

Saturday, January 30, 3:00 P.M., at T.S.C. - Mrs. Trudy Smith of Groton will give a demonstration lecture on Bird Banding. Mrs. Smith is a member of the Eastern Bird Banding Association and has lectured widely. This program is open to all age groups. Donation : Members 10¢ , Non-members 50¢.

Saturday, February 13, 3:00 P.M., at T.S.C. - Dr. Bern Swarts of Groton will lecture on Rocks & Minerals - Cut & Polished. Dr. Swarts has collected rocks and minerals from California to Maine and has lectured to many groups on this interesting subject. This lecture is open to all age groups. Donation : Members 10¢ , Non-members 50¢.

Wednesday, February 17, 8:00 P.M., at P.S.W.S. - The February Trailside Lecture, by Robert F. Kunz. Refer to page 4 of this issue of Nature Notes for details.

FIELD TRIP

Sunday, February 14, 10:00 A.M., at P.S.W.S. - This will be the third of the P.S.W.S. - T.S.C. Family Field Trips. We will meet at the Pequot-sepos Wildlife Sanctuary building in Mystic and observe birds around the feeders there.

MOVIE

Saturday, February 20, 10:00 A.M., at P.S.W.S. - A movie in sound and color, produced by the National Audubon Society, and entitled "Birds of Africa". Showing time 45 minutes. Free to P.S.W.S. members , Non-member adults 50¢, children 25¢.

CONTEST

Because of the response to the What-Is-It? contest held in November, we are going to run another one...

The object of the What-Is-It? box is to find out if you can identify the object inside without seeing it, by putting your hand through a masked opening.

As before, the contest will be held at three levels, with one prize given at the end of the contest in each category, as follows:

1. Kindergarten - 2nd grade
2. 3rd grade - 6th grade
3. Over 6th grade

The contest will begin on January 26th and will run until February 28th. The contents of the boxes will be changed once each week, giving a total of five (5) changes.

Please note...The winners of all three categories in the last contest were those who TRIED the most! If you don't try..you'll never win!

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Pequot-sepos Wildlife Sanctuary Trailside Lecture

February 17, 1965

PREDATION - Prejudice and Progress by Robert F. Kunz

Color slides and narration upon the predaceous bird species of Europe and Northeastern United States given by Robert F. Kunz. Since youth Mr. Kunz has been strongly interested in predaceous bird species and has made studies of various species of hawks and owls in the wild and in captivity. Curator of the Pequot-sepos Wildlife Sanctuary, Editor of "Pequot Trails" and the "Pequot Conservationist", Mr. Kunz holds membership in The Nature Conservancy and is a member of their Connecticut Chapter's Barn Island Natural Area Comm. He is also a member of the Conn. Valley Action Comm., Inc.

This lecture will be offered admission-free to members of The Thames Science Center. This is being done in consideration of the trial merger with the Pequot-sepos Wildlife Sanctuary.

NATURE NOTE - JANUARY 1965

FEEDING BIRDS IN WINTER

by

Don-Paul Sommerfeld - former Director
Thames Science Center

Some people have already begun to feed the birds, not because the birds need the food yet, but rather because of the increased competition to get favorite species (like the cardinal) to one's feeder. Birds have already started to establish feeding patterns which will last thru the winter. If we have a rough winter as predicted, many birds will depend on people for their survival. Please remember that once you have started winter feeding of the birds, you must keep it up regularly as birds will soon come to depend upon you for food. It is better not to feed the birds at all than to feed them haphazardly.

Each species has its own favorite foods and eating habits. The fat eaters seem to be the most common birds at feeding stations. This group includes chickadees, nuthatches, some woodpeckers, the titmouse, kinglets, and three unwanted visitors: grackles, starlings, and blue jays. Many people are able to keep their unwanted visitors away from the feeding area by scattering lots of stale bread and a little suet or fat some distance from the regular feeding areas. Beef suet, hard fat, stale bread soaked in bacon drippings, hard peanut butter, any nuts (peanuts are a favorite of the nuthatch; coconut will be eaten by chickadees & nuthatches), and fatty foods like pie crust, cake & pancakes are good for the above birds. Stale doughnuts, when suspended in the air, can only be eaten by small birds that are able to cling to them (chickadees, nuthatches, & woodpeckers).

Of the seed eating birds, some are ground feeders, some will eat only from an elevated feeder, and others will go wherever food is available. Sunflower seeds are a must for chickadees, nuthatches, cardinals, goldfinches, evening grosbeaks, and blue jays. Chickadees and nuthatches prefer to get seeds from a feeder, blue jays and cardinals seem to prefer to feed on the ground, and evening grosbeaks with their enormous appetites feed wherever seed is to be found. The small wildbird seed mixes attract many sparrows, in addition to juncos, finches, and cowbirds. The finches and some of the sparrows will come to your bird feeder, whereas the juncos and cowbirds are ground feeders. Cracked corn or wheat is good for drawing mourning doves.

Robins, mockingbirds, catbirds, cedar waxwings, cardinals, and, the brown thrasher sometime appear in mid-winter. These birds like fruit or berries; chopped dried fruit or raisins are easily added to the feeder menu. Bayberry, juniper or redcedar, viburnum, hackberry, American holly, hawthorne, winterberry, and multiflora rose hips provide good winter food for these birds. If these plants are uncommon near your home, you may wish to hang branches of some of these in your feeding area. In spite of all the talk about bittersweet providing food for birds, the only bird we know of that was observed eating the berries was the brown thrasher. Grit in the form of sand or finely crushed shells should be provided after the ground freezes. In many areas, drinking water should also be made available.

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